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Missão Permanente de Portugal

Genebra

Observations to the report by four members

of the European Parliament

1. First of all it must be pointed out that the document in question does not constitue a report of the European Parliament, but merely a report by four of its members invited by the Indonesian Parliament to visit Indonesia and East Timor.

2. Indonesia wishes certainly to suggest that this report represents the opinion of the European Parliament. But the truth is that the European Parliament as a whole adopted a resolution on the human rights situation in Indonesia, which includes a paragraph concerning the situation in East Timor (paragraph F). In that paragraph the Parliament states that the human rights violations are particularly serious in East Timor, adding that the occupation of this territory, by Indonesia, prevents the people of East Timor to exercise their right to self-determination and to be respected in their fundamental rights, including, in certain cases, their right to life. This resolution has been approved by the European Parliament on March 11th, 1988 (with 78 votes in favour, 20 against and 38 abstentions).

3. Later on, the Political Committee adopted a report dealing specifically with the situation in East Timor, which condems the occupation of the territory by Indonesia and the

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violations of human rights within the territory. This report, prepared by Mrs Ien van den Heuvel and already adopted by the Political Committee, will be submitted to the Parliament on September 13th.

4. The two documents just mentionned being undoubtly much more representative than the "report by four members of the European Parliament", it does not seem fair to refer to this one while omitting the two others. Such a choice is certainly not dictated by the wish to contribute to a more objective and impartial knowledge of the true situation in East Timor.

5. The authors of the report seem to have a favourable prejudice towards Indonesia, which is disclosed when tey speak of the "integration of East Timor into Indonesia", a notion that is contrary to the resolutions of the different organs of the United Nations. But, in spite of their attitude, the report confirms several of the allegations concerning the human rights situation in East Timor. For instance:

a) Pagragraphs 9 and 10 show that the indonesian autorities have tried to hide from the view of the visitors certain aspects of the situation. And a statement by the catholic Bishop, claiming that troops had been withdrawn for the

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period of the visit (last sentence of paragraph 22), concurs with that conclusion.

b) The contacts have been limited. For instance, there was no contact with the resistance forces.

c) The report admits that the local Governor has no influence in many important areas of policy (paragraph 26) which suggests that the indonesian authorities themselves control these matters.

d) The Bishop - certainly because of his position in a territory with a large majority of catholics - is in a position that enables him to speak more freely. He has denounced the existance of cases of brutality and stated that the military presence in East Timor was repressive (paragraphe 22).

d) Paragraph 27, which mentions the visits of journalits, shows that entrance in the territory continues to be very difficult. As matter of fact the Governor himself acknowledges implicitly that access to the territory is limited (pagraph 25).

f) The Recommendations on the "Legal problem" show that there is not yet in East Timor a just and equitable solution.

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g) The Recommendations on human rights imply that some of these rights are being violated, specifically in the fields of freedom of mouvement and access to civil justice. The military presence, qualified by the Bishop as repressive (pagraphe 22), is also criticized .

6. For all these reasons the report by four members of the European Parliament cannot invalidate the numerous allegations of human rights violations in East Timor made by several individuals and organizations, including the European Parliament.

Geneva, 31st August 1988